OFF THE TRACK

...AND ON THE TABLE

Collective Bargaining Bulletin of Non-Academic Senate Faculty
of the University of California 1984

Non-Senate Collective Bargaining

Update

Collective bargaining between UC-AFT and the University on a contract for Unit 18 non-Senate faculty has entered a new and difficult phase. While our negotiators have presented a progressive and academically sound proposal which recognizes our responsibilities as well as our need for a secure work environment, the University negotiators refuse to seek a cooperative approach.

One of the first items discussed in depth is our proposed sexual harassment clause which forbids all forms of sex and sex preference discrimination including the use of obscene stereotypes by our colleagues and administrators. The University has responded by claiming that such a clause would violate the First Amendment and that the administrators are free to say whatever they want so long as it doesn't interfere with our work. The same type of limited approach by the University has disrupted negotiations at the table in a highly charged session over race and religious discrimination.

The University is even refusing to recognize the need for binding grievance arbitration procedures, and instead has proposed that they make all final determinations involving hiring, evaluation, promotion and firing. In fact, the University's proposals would result in all of our unit being terminated within the next few years.

The most regrettable aspect of the University's approach has been the "us versus them" mentality exhibited throughout the negotiations by their bargaining team and President Gardner's representatives. At a time when administrators and non-Senate faculty should be working together for a better academic/teaching environment, the administration now seems intent on trying to run the University like a multi-national corporation rather than showing concern for education.

It is becoming abundantly clear that this corporate mentality has forgotten the exciting goals involved in academic freedom and the educational process. The fact that the University is advocating the firing of our most proven colleagues and the rapid termination (without possibility of advancement) of our new teachers highlights the administration's insensitivity not only to our mission, but also the crucial need for superlative undergraduate and graduate education. Outstanding teaching, dynamic research, excellent student evaluations and colleagial recognition of our work seems irrelevant to the corporate mind which is hell-bent on making a bracero program out of all non-tenured faculty on our nine campuses.

As long as the adminstration and their underlings at the bargaining table insist on this sad approach, negotiations will be fruitless, the spirit of academia will die, recruitment of excellent faculty will decline, and the University itself will suffer irremedial damage that will plague it for generations. While we will continue to seek to overcome this impasse through every legitimate means, the tragedy is that this University has forgotten its mission.

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